

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00

CIAE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-05 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 ACDA-05 TRSE-00 SAJ-01 IO-10

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O R 061625Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6530

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

AMCONSUL THESSALONIKI

USMISSION NATO

USCINCEUR

DIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 ATHENS 8723

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, PINT, GR

SUBJECT: GREEK REFERENDUM ON CROWNED DEMOCRACY/PRESIDENTIAL  
REPUBLIC

1. SUMMARY. AFTER THREE-WEEK CAMPAIGN PERIOD REMARKABLE PRIMARILY  
FOR ABSENCE OF SPONTANEOUS PUBLIC INTEREST, GREEK ELECTORATE  
AGAIN GOES TO POLLS DECEMBER 8 TO CHOOSE BETWEEN CROWNED DEMOCRACY  
AND PRESIDENTIAL REPUBLIC. ESTIMATING RESULTS OF DECEMBER 8  
REFERENDUM REQUIRES CAUTIONARY CAVEATS SIMILAR TO THOSE APPLIED  
TO PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS OF NOVEMBER 17, TO WHICH MUST BE ADDED  
UNCERTAINTIES OF EVEN LARGER NUMBER OF APPARENTLY STILL  
UNDECIDED VOTERS AND ANNOUNCED NEUTRALITY OF PM CARAMANLIS AND ND  
PARTY. KING CONSTANTINE WILL MAKE FINAL APPEAL ON NATIONWIDE TV  
DECEMBER 6 WHICH IS LIKELY TO BE PERSONAL AND INFORMAL AND MAY  
SWING SOME VOTES TOWARD THE KING. FUNDAMENTAL GREEK UNPREDICTABIL-  
ITY ALSO MUST BE FACTORED INTO BALLOTING PROGNOSIS DESPITE WIDELY  
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HELD ESTIMATE THAT KING WILL POLL WELL UNDER REQUIRED MAJORITY

VOTE. WE BELIEVE FACTORS WORKING AGAINST THE MONARCHY ARE (A) ITS "FOREIGNNESS", (B) ITS FAILURE TO ESTABLISH IN THE PAST AN IMAGE OF IMPARTIALITY, AND (C) ITS SUPPOSED EXPENSIVENESS. THE PRINCIPAL FACTORS WORKING FOR THE MONARCHY ARE (A) THE BASIC CONSERVATISM OF GREEK PROVINCIAL SOCIETY, (B) THE UNDEFINED NATURE OF THE PRESIDENTIAL ALTERNATIVE, AND (C) THE RELATIVE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE CAMPAIGN MOUNTED BY THE KING AND HIS SUPPORTERS. ON BALANCE WE ESTIMATE TOTAL VOTE FOR REPUBLIC, RANGE WILL BE BETWEEN 45-55 O/O. MONARCHY WON THREE OF FIVE PREVIOUS GREEK PLEBISCITES THIS CENTURY WHICH IN PAST AFFECTED CONDUCT OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS AS MAJOR NATIONAL ISSUE. UNCHARACTERISTIC GREEK APATHY THIS REFERENDUM, DESPITE SHARPLY MIXED EMOTIONS TOWARD KING CONSTANTINE BECAUSE OF HIS INVOLVEMENT IN PRE-1967 POLITICS AND SUBSEQUENT AMBIVALENCE TOWARD JUNTA AND KEEN NATIONAL SATISFACTION IN JUST RECOVERED DEMOCRACY, INCREASES DIFFICULTY OF FORECAST. EMBASSY'S ASSESSMENT IS THAT POLLING STRENGTH FOR CROWNED DEMOCRACY WILL BE BETWEEN 35-40 PERCENT. WE EXPECT UNUSUALLY LARGE NUMBER BLANK BALLOTS, PERHAPS UP TO 10 PER CENT. REGARDLESS OF OUTCOME OF REFERENDUM KEY U.S. INTERESTS SHOULD NOT BE DIRECTLY AFFECTED. END SUMMARY.

2. AS REPORTED EARLIER MOST SALIENT ASPECT OF REFERENDUM CAMPAIGN IS VOTER APATHY. ELECTORATE HAS PREFERRED TO SIT BACK AND RELISH FIRST FRUITS OF PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS USHERING IN NEW DEMOCRATIC ERA RATHER THAN FACE UP TO TIME-HONORED AND AT THIS POINT IN TWENTIETH CENTURY SOMEWHAT ANACHRONISTIC ISSUE WHICH HAS ANIMATED GREEK POLITICAL LIFE SINCE THE BIRTH OF MODERN GREEK INDEPENDENCE. VOTERS SHRUG AT WHAT MAY BE INCONSEQUENTIAL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CROWNED DEMOCRACY WHERE MONARCH IS LARGELY CEREMONIAL AND PRESIDENTIAL REPUBLIC WHERE POWERS OF PRESIDENT STILL UNDEFINED. SOME COMPLAIN OVER HAVING TO LOSE TWO WEEKENDS WITHIN ONE MONTH, PARTICULARLY BECAUSE REFERENDUM PRESENTS UNCLEAR ALTERNATIVES PENDING CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES YET TO BE DISCUSSED, LET ALONE ENACTED. MOREOVER, DOMESTIC ECONOMIC PROBLEMS, CYPRUS, DEJUNTIZATION, MIDDLE EAST TENSION, REJUVENATED GREEK RELATIONS WITH EEC AND COUNCIL OF EUROPE HAVE ALL UPSTAGED REFERENDUM IN PUBLIC INTEREST.

3. VOTERS, PARTICULARLY NEW DEMOCRACY ADHERENTS WHO CONTINUE WITHOUT PARTY GUIDANCE, SEEM BEWILDERED BY PM CARAMANLIS' CONFIDENTIAL

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EXPRESSED NEUTRALITY POSTURE. ALTHOUGH CARAMANLIS' POSITION AGAINST BACKGROUND OF HIS PAST PROBLEMS WITH GREEK ROYAL FAMILY IS GENERALLY INTERPRETED AS INDICATING A PREFERENCE FOR REPUBLIC, SOMEWHERE BETWEEN 90-100 ND DEPUTIES ARE KNOWN MONARCHISTS AND ARE QUIETLY COUNSELING CONSTITUENTS ACCORDINGLY. PM'S PRUDENT NEUTRALITY HAS EXTRICATED ND FROM INTERNAL WRANGLER WITH POTENTIALLY DIVISIVE EFFECTS WITHIN PARTY ON EVE OF CONVENING OF NEW PARLIAMENT. AT SAME TIME DECEMBER 8 REFERENDUM MARKS FIRST

TIME IN GREEK HISTORY WHEN PARTY IN POWER HAS NOT TAKEN POSITION  
WHICH INVALIDATES OLD GREEK POLITICAL ADAGE THAT NO GREEK  
GOVERNMENT HAS EVER LOST A REFERENDUM.

4. MONARCHY SUPPORTERS HAVE CLAIMED FULL FAITH IN DEMOCRACY AND  
STRESSED ROYAL CONTRIBUTION TO STABILITY AND CONTINUITY. KING  
CONSTANTINE HIMSELF DURING HIS NOVEMBER 26 TV BROADCAST PLEDGED  
NOT TO INTERFERE IN POLITICS, BUT HIS OWN RECORD PRODUCES  
CONSIDERABLE SKEPTICISM ABOUT WHETHER IN THE EVENT HE WOULD STAND  
BY SUCH DECLARATION OR EVEN REMAIN SILENT WHEN PARLIAMENT BEGINS  
TO FORMULATE CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES CUTTING BACK HIS ROLE TO  
STRICTLY CEREMONIAL PROPORTIONS. MONARCHISTS SEEK TO EMPHASIZE  
THAT OLD POLITICAL WORLD RECOGNIZED KING AS LEGAL CHIEF OF STATE  
DURING DICTATORSHIP AND CONTEND HE SHOULD HAVE BEEN CALLED BACK  
LAST JULY WHEN CARAMANLIS RETURNED.

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00

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RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 ACDA-05 TRSE-00 SAJ-01 IO-10

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O R 061625Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6531

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

AMCONSUL THESSALONIKI

USMISSION NATO

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 ATHENS 8723

5. SOMEWHAT SURPRISINGLY, CAMPAIGN FOR CROWNED DEMOCRACY HAS NOT  
PORTRAYED KING AS SYMBOL OF NATIONAL UNITY OPPOSED TO OUTSIDE

UNFRIENDLY FORCES, VIZ. COMMUNISM OR MORE RADICAL BRAND OF SOCIALISM (AS SOME SEE PASOK), NOR HAVE ROYALISTS PRESENTED THEIR CASE ON BASIS OF MONARCHY AS INSTITUTION WHICH HAS STOOD BY NATION IN CRITICAL PERIODS OF LAST 100 YEARS OF GLUCKSBURG FAMILY IN GREECE. CAMPAIGN FOR KING'S RETURN HAS BEEN LARGELY BASED ON SENTIMENT AS WITNESSED BY PLETHORA OF PHOTOGRAPHS OF PHOTOGENIC ROYAL FAMILY AND PRESENTATION OF CONSTANTINE AS KNOWN FACTOR, WHEREAS PRESIDENT IN REPUBLICAN FORM OF GOVERNMENT WOULD BE SUBJECT TO PARTY DIRECTION AND COULD BECOME DIVISIVE FACTOR. THIS LAST POINT WAS CENTRAL TO EX-PM STEPHANOPOULOS' APPEAL THIS WEEK TO VOTERS TO SUPPORT MONARCHY. EX-PM ATHANASSIADES-NOVAS HAS ALSO ENDORSED KING'S RETURN. TERTIARY CAMPAIGN THEME OF ROYALISTS HAS BEEN THAT DICTATORSHIP EXPELLED MONARCH THROUGH ILLEGAL STAGE-MANAGED 1973 PLEBISCITE SO THAT FAIR PLAY COMPELS HIS RETURN, WHATEVER THE ULTIMATE CHANGES IN CONFIDENTIAL

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GREEK POLITICAL STRUCTURE MAY BE. OVERALL EMOTIONAL APPEAL LED REPUBLICANS TO CHARGE THAT KING IS PUSHING HARDEST FOR VOTE OF WOMEN WHO CONSTITUTE OVER 50 O/O OF VOTING ELECTORATE.

6. REPUBLICANS HAVE PURSUED DIFFUSE PLATFORMS IN OPPOSING CROWNED DEMOCRACY. (IN FACT CAMPAIGNING BY BOTH SIDES HAS BEEN LARGELY NEGATIVE IN CRITICIZING DEFECTS OF OTHER'S POSITION.) PASOK AND LEFTISTS INSIST THAT MONARCHY HAS ALWAYS REPRESENTED INTERESTS OF FOREIGN AGENTS AND THOSE OF LOCAL ESTABLISHMENT OLIGARCHY FOSTERING POLITICAL INSTABILITY AND MILITARY INTERVENTION IN PUBLIC LIFE. CU/NF GEORGE MAVROS REITERATED HIS PARTY'S WELL-KNOWN POSITION SUPPORTING REPUBLIC. FORMER COORDINATION MINISTER C. MITSOTAKIS AND FELLOW CRETAN NIKITAS VENIZELOS HAVE ALSO THROWN IN LOT WITH REPUBLICANS. EX-PM MARKEZINIS REPORTEDLY ALSO SUPPORTS REPUBLIC; THIS REPRESENTS MAJOR SHIFT IN MARKEZINIS' POSITION SINCE HE WAS ONCE LEGAL ADVISOR TO PALACE. HOWEVER, MARKEZINIS' OPPOSITION TO MONARCHY, LIKE THAT OF PAPANDREOU, COULD HAVE OPPOSITE IMPACT--MARKEZINIS BECAUSE OF LOW ESTEEM IN WHICH HE IS HELD FOR SERVING AS PM UNDER PAPADOPOULOS AND PAPANDREOU BECAUSE OF RADICALNESS OF HIS POSITION WHICH FRIGHTENS VOTERS WHO FEAR THAT IF PASOK EVER COMES TO POWER MONARCHY WOULD PROVIDE INDISPENSABLE BALANCING ELEMENT.

7. ARGUMENT IS MADE THAT INSTITUTION OF MONARCHY INVOLVES FINANCIAL OUTLAY ALTOGETHER DISAPPROPORTIONATE TO LIMITED POLITICAL VALUE AND OUT OF KEEPING FOR "POOR" COUNTRY LIKE GREECE. IN ADDITION, OPPONENTS EMPHASIZE THAT ROYAL FAMILY IS NOT REALLY GREEK AND IS NO MORE THAN UNFORTUNATE LEGACY AND ENDURING SYMBOL OF DAYS WHEN GREECE HAD TO ACCEPT "FOREIGN FACTOR" TO SURVIVE AS INDEPENDENT STATE. REPUBLICANS INITIALLY CHARGED THAT FOREIGN MONEY, SPECIFICALLY FROM THE SHAH OF IRAN, DANISH ROYAL FAMILY, JUAN CARLOS OF SPAIN AND OTHERS WAS BEING LAVISHLY SPEND ON MONARCHY CAMPAING. THESE CHARGES HAVE NOW BEEN SUCCEDED BY RUMOR

THAT KING'S ADHERENTS ARE PREPARED TO BUY VOTES. IN ANY CASE  
MONARCHISTS APPARENTLY DO NOT LACK FUNDS JUDGING FROM APPEARANCES  
IN ATHENS.

8. REPUBLICAN PRESS HAS BEEN HITTING HARDER AT FIOBLES OF  
MONARCHY AND PRINTING LONG LISTS OF PROMINENT CITIZENS  
SUPPORTING PRESIDENTIAL REPUBLIC. SHARPEST ATTACKS ON MONARCHY  
HAVE BEEN MADE BY THE LAMBRAKIS NEWSPAPER CHAIN, NOTABLY VIMA  
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AND NEA, WHILE IMPLICITLY ROYALIST PAPERS SUCH AS KATHEMERINI  
HAVE KEPT THEIR DEFENSE IN A LOW KEY.

9. CAMPAIGN FOR 1974 REFERENDUM THUS WINDS DOWN WITHOUT EVER  
REALLY HAVING GOTTEN UP STEAM. WE BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT AFTER  
A SLOW START THE PRO-MONARCHISTS HAVE GAINED GROUND AND THAT,  
WHILE IN A MINORITY, THEY WILL GAIN SUPPORT OF SOME UNDECIDED  
VOTERS WHO CONCLUDE THAT THE KING IS A SAFER CHOICE THAN AN AS  
YET UNIDENTIFIED PRESIDENT WITH UNCERTAIN POWERS. THE KING MAY  
ALSO PROFIT FROM THE SUPPORT OF SOME NIMINALLY REPUBLICAN VOTERS  
WHO VISUALIZE HIM ACTING AS A COUNTERWEIGHT TO CARAMANLIS.  
PROBABLE OUTCOME WILL BE SMALL MAJORITY FOR PRESIDENTIAL  
REPUBLIC; WE ESTIMATE RANGE OF 45-55 O/O. BLANK BALLOTS ARE  
LIKELY TO BE NUMEROUS AND COULD REACH 10 O/O. PRO-MONARCHY VOTE  
LIKELY TO BE 35-40 O/O.  
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## Message Attributes

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